DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 457 071 SO 031 575

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TITLE	The Future of Affirmative Action. Grade 11 Lesson. Schools of California Online Resources for Education (SCORE): Connecting California's Classrooms to the World.
INSTITUTION	San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, CA.
PUB DATE	1999-00-00
NOTE	15p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Schools of California Online Resources for Education, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, 601 North East Street, San Bernardino, CA 92410-3093. E-mail: webmaster@score.rims.k12.ca.us; Web site: http://score.rims.k12.ca.us.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Standards; *Affirmative Action; *Civil Rights; Essays; *Federal Programs; *Government Role; Grade 11; High Schools; Interdisciplinary Approach; Organizational Communication; *Persuasive Discourse; *Role Playing; Social Studies
IDENTIFIERS	Executive Order 11873; *Oral Presentations

ABSTRACT

Executive Order 11873 was introduced in June 1965 by President Lyndon B. Johnson in a speech at Howard University. This order began the first of the federal government's affirmative action programs. Since that time, these programs have become a major topic among not only government officials at all levels of government but the general population of the United States. In this lesson plan, students represent particular interest groups before a Senate subcommittee charged to determine the future of federal affirmative action programs. Some of the groups represented will be the American Indian Movement, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, United Farm Workers, Christian Coalition, National Organization for Women, Eagle Forum, Republican Party, and Democratic Party. Noting that some of these groups will be in favor of affirmative action and some will be against it, the lesson states that each student's role will be to represent the position of the organization he/she is assigned and to prepare a presentation (and an essay) that has the evidence necessary to convince the subcommittee which course of action to pursue. Students are provided with background information, detailed instructions, and online resources. The teacher's notes describe the unit's purpose, explain the application of history/social science standards, and suggest teaching strategies. (Contains a transcript of the Lyndon B. Johnson speech.) (BT)

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Schools of California Online Resources for Education (SCORE): Connecting California's Classrooms to the World

THE FUTURE OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

11th Grade Lesson by Michael Ballard

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1999

SO 031 575

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The Future of Affirmative Action

Task

On June 4, 1965, in a speech at Howard University, in Washington D.C., President Lyndon B. Johnson introduced Executive Order 11873. This order began the first of the federal government's affirmative action programs. Since that time these programs have become a major topic of debate among, not only government officials at all levels of government, but among the general population of the United States.

You have been asked to represent a particular interested group before a Senate subcommittee which is charged to determine the future of federal affirmative action programs in this country. Among the groups represented will be American Indian Movement, NAACP, The United Farm Workers, The Christian Coalition, National Organization for Women, The Eagle Forum, the Republican Party and the Democratic Party.

Some of these organizations are very much in favor of affirmative action and some are very much opposed to these programs. Your role is to accept the position of the organization you are assigned to represent and prepare a high powered presentation that is not based solely on an emotional plea, but has the solid evidence necessary to convince this Senate subcommittee of which course of action to pursue.

Process

- **First**, you need to gain a greater, more factually based understanding of exactly what affirmative action is designed to do.

- **Second**, within a collaborative group choose one of the organizations listed above in the Task. You will research and understand the purpose and mission of the organization your group represents and develop arguments which will support this organization's point of view.

- **Third**, prepare a powerful presentation that will be interesting, persuasive and accurate. The Big Six approach found in the Social Studies Score Site at: http://edweb.sdsu.edu/edfirst/bigsix/bigsix.html is a very good approach to the research necessary for this project.

Introduction

Begin by reading the 1965 speech by Lyndon Johnson which started the idea of federal affirmative action. It is important that you pay special attention to the hard evidence he has to support his idea. You should then discuss exactly what Affirmative Action is, fact and myth. This discussion will center on giving hard evidence to back up whatever thoughts you have on the subject.

Resources

A general Net Search under the words Affirmative Action will provide a great variety of sources. The following are some specific sites which will prove very useful.

Chicano Home Page
http://www.pbs.org/chicano/index.html
National Organization for Women
http://www.now.org/
Eagle Forum
http://www.basenet.net/~eagle/eagle.html
Lyndon Johnson Presidential Library
http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/
Both Sides of Affirmative Action
http://members.aol.com/mdpetersen/eqdjtice.htm
Executive order 11246
http://hr.ucdavis.edu/saad/11246.htm
Positive and Negative View of Affirmative Action
http://www.sru.edu/depts/cisba/comm/awalters/smgr/maarten/maxhpfro.htm
Republican Party
http://www.republicanweb.com/

Democratic Party
http://www.democrats.org/

Learning Advice

This is designed to be a student centered activity. You are to make meaning out of the assignment by deciding what ideas are important and how you should approach your task. Develop the important questions as a group and allow time to do the research. You will be speaking before a Senate subcommittee, your dress, speech and actions should reflect such.

Demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic. Reading to the class from a piece of paper does not demonstrate understanding. This only demonstrates the ability to read. Consider using a laser disk or video segment to help demonstrate the point you are trying to make. Consider how to get the entire class involved.

If available, HyperStudio, HyperCard or PowerPoint are very useful presentation tools and very good methods for further incorporating technology into the presentation.

Evaluation

Your evaluation will be the presentation with a subsequent essay.
An effective presentation should include the following elements:

- **Enthusiasm.** Show that you have an interest in what you are doing. Enthusiasm is contagious. If you have it, it will transfer to your audience.

- **Short lively speaking segments.** Television has taught us that our attention span is very short. Listening to the same voice for more than a couple of minutes at a time will put us to sleep. Keep your speaking segments short and snappy.

- **Scatter yourselves around the room.** This forces the audience to refocus its attention when a different person begins to speak.

- **Clearly state your evidence.** Make it clear that your evidence is real and not just your opinion.

State important ideas several times in several different ways.

- **Audiovisual**. This can be a very powerful way to bring your point home. We live in an age of multimedia. You don't have to be literal in your use of multimedia. Use it to present an idea.

The key to your essay should be the use of specific, hard evidence. You should draw on evidence presented by groups representing both sides of the issue. While there is a place for the emotional argument, to rely completely on emotions is not an effective method. The best argument would incorporate facts and figures which give specific numbers both in terms of money and people to how your plan would benefit those from all walks of life and benefit the country as a whole.

Teacher Notes

Grade Level/Unit:

- Grade 11 - Civil Rights

H/SS Content Standards:

> 11.11 Students analyze the major social problems and domestic policy issues in contemporary American society, in terms of:
>
> 7.how the federal, state and local governments have responded to demographic and social changes such as population shifts to the suburbs, racial concentrations in the cities, Frostbelt to Sunbelt migration, international migration, decline of the family farm, increase in out of wedlock births, and drug abuse

Grade Level/Unit:

- Grade12 - Political Democracy

H/SS Content Standards:

> 12.10 Students formulate questions about and defend their analyses of tensions within the U.S. constitution a democracy and the importance of maintaining a balance between these concepts (e.g., majority rule and individual rights, liberty and equality, state and national authority in a federal system, civil disobedience and the rule of law, freedom of the press and right

to a fair trial, the relationship of religion and government)

Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills: Grades 9-12

Historical Research, Evidence and Point of View

4.students construct and test hypotheses; collect, evaluate and employ information from multiple primary and secondary sources; and apply it in oral and written presentations

Purpose:

- Students will be able to describe the original intent of Equal Opportunity as put forth during the Johnson Administration.
- Students will be able to site examples of the results of this executive order during the last 30 years.
- Students will be able to summarize the perspectives held by various interest groups on Affirmative Action today.
- Students will be able to orally present a reasoned argument defending a point of view about Affirmative Action.

Lesson Length:
Four or five days for research and presentation

Learning Advice:
Many times I require an audience participation activity which forces each group to get the entire class physically involved in the presentation. In this particular activity, perhaps the class can play the part of Senators. Liberal groups could be liberal Senators and conservative groups could be conservative Senators. They could then cross examine the group making the presentation. Liberal Senators would ask questions friendly to the liberal groups and conservative Senators would ask questions friendly to the conservative groups and vice versa.

Evaluation:
I have the students grade each group as well as grading the group myself. Students grade on four broad categories:

1. Quality of Information
2. How much did they make you think
3. The use of technology
4. Enthusiasm

Each category is worth 5 points so a perfect score is 20. I then average the grades given by class and count this as one half of the presentation grade. The grade I give is the other half. I have been pleasantly surprised over the years how close the class average comes to my grade.

Follow-up:
As a follow-up to the presentation, I would suggest an essay that requires each student to develop a compromise plan. Taking information from each presentation, each student should create a plan they feel would be fair to all parties involved. They must then defend the plan they have created.

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Lyndon B. Johnson

"To Fulfill These Rights": Commencement Address at Howard University

June 4, 1965

Our earth is the home of revolution. In every corner of every continent men charged with hope contend with ancient ways in the pursuit of justice. They reach for the newest of weapons to realize the oldest of dreams, that each may walk in freedom and pride, stretching his talents, enjoying the fruits of the earth.

Our enemies may occasionally seize the day of change, but it is the banner of our revolution they take. And our own future is linked to this process of swift and turbulent change in many lands in the world. But nothing in any country touches us more profoundly, and nothing is more freighted with meaning for our own destiny than the revolution of the Negro American.

In far too many ways American Negroes have been another nation: deprived of freedom, crippled by hatred, the doors of opportunity closed to hope.

In our time change has come to this Nation, too. The American Negro, acting with impressive restraint, has peacefully protested and marched, entered the courtrooms and the seats of government, demanding a justice that has long been denied. The voice of the Negro was the call to action. But it is a tribute to America that, once aroused, the courts and the Congress, the President and most of the people, have been the allies of progress . . .

The voting rights bill will be the latest, and among the most important, in a long series of victories. But this victory - as Winston Churchill said of another triumph for freedom - "is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

That beginning is freedom; and the barriers to that freedom are tumbling down. Freedom is the right to share, share fully and equally, in American society - to vote, to hold a job, to enter a public place, to go to school. It is the right to be treated in every part of our national life as a person equal in dignity and promise to all others.

Freedom is Not Enough

But freedom is not enough. You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: Now you are free to go where you want, and do as you desire, and choose the leaders you please.

You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, "you are free to compete with all the others," and still justly

believe that you have been completely fair.

Thus it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates.

This is the next and the more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity. We seek not just legal equity but human ability, not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result.

For the task is to give 20 million Negroes the same chance as every other American to learn and grow, to work and share in society, to develop their abilities - physical, mental and spiritual, and to pursue their individual happiness.

To this end equal opportunity is essential, but not enough, not enough. Men and women of all races are born with the same range of abilities. But ability is not just the product of birth. Ability is stretched or stunted by the family that you live with, and the neighborhood you live in - by the school you go to and the poverty or the richness of your surroundings. It is the product of a hundred unseen forces playing upon the infant, the child, and finally the man.

Progress for Some

This graduating class at Howard University is witness to the indomitable determination of the Negro American to win his way in American life.

The number of Negroes in schools of higher learning has almost doubled in 15 years. The number of nonwhite professional workers has more than doubled in 10 years. The median income of Negro college women tonight exceeds that of white college women. And there are also the enormous accomplishments of distinguished Negroes - many of them graduates of this institution, and one of them the first lady ambassador in the history of the United States.

These are proud and impressive achievements. But they tell only the story of a growing middle-class minority, steadily narrowing the gap between them and their white counterparts.

A Widening Gulf

But for the great majority of Negro Americans - the poor, the unemployed, the uprooted, and the dispossessed - there is a much grimmer story. They still, as we meet here tonight, are another nation. Despite the court orders and the laws, despite the legislative victories and the speeches, for them the walls are rising and the gulf is widening.

Here are some of the facts of this American failure.

Thirty-five years ago, the rate of unemployment for Negroes and whites was about the same. Tonight

the Negro rate is twice as high.

In 1948 the 8 percent unemployment rate for Negro teenage boys was actually less than that of whites. By last year that rate had grown to 23 percent, as against 13 percent for whites unemployed.

Between 1949 and 1959, the income of Negro men relative to white men declined in every section of this country. From 1952 to 1963 the median income of Negro families compared to white actually dropped from 57 percent to 53 percent.

In the years 1955 through 1957, 22 percent of experienced Negro workers were out of work at some time during the year. In 1961 through 1963 that proportion had soared to 29 percent.

Since 1947 the number of white families living in poverty has decreased 27 percent while the number of poorer nonwhite families decreased only 3 percent.

The infant mortality of nonwhites in 1940 was 70 percent greater than whites. Twenty-two years later it was 90 percent greater.

Moreover, the isolation of negro from white communities is increasing, rather than decreasing as Negroes crowd into the central cities and become a city within a city.

Of course Negro Americans as well as white Americans have shared in our rising national abundance. But the harsh fact of the matter is that in the battle for true equality too many - far too many - are losing ground every day.

The Causes of Inequality

We are not completely sure why this is. We know the causes are complex and subtle. But we do know the two broad basic reasons. And we do know that we have to act.

First, Negroes are trapped - as many whites are trapped - in inherited, gateless poverty. They lack training and skills. They are shut in, in slums, without decent medical care. Private and public poverty combine to cripple their capacities.

We are trying to attack these evils through our poverty program, through our education program, through our medical care and our other health programs, and a dozen more of the Great Society programs that are aimed at the root causes of this poverty.

We will increase, and we will accelerate, and we will broaden this attack in years to come until this most enduring of foes finally yields to our unyielding will.

But there is a second cause - much more difficult to explain, more deeply grounded, more desperate in its force. It is the devastating heritage of long years of slavery; and a century of oppression, hatred, and injustice.

Special Nature of Negro Poverty

For Negro poverty is not white poverty. Many of its causes and many of its cures are the same. But there are differences - deep, corrosive, obstinate differences - radiating painful roots into the community, and into the family, and the nature of the individual.

These differences are not racial differences. They are solely and simply the consequence of ancient brutality, past injustice, and present prejudice. They are anguishing to observe. For the Negro they are a constant reminder of oppression. For the white they are a constant reminder of guilt. But they must be faced and they must be dealt with and they must be overcome, if we are ever to reach the time when the only difference between Negroes and whites is the color of their skin.

Nor can we find a complete answer in the experience of other American minorities. They made a valiant and a largely successful effort to emerge from poverty and prejudice.

The Negro, like these others, will have to rely mostly upon his own efforts. But he just can not do it alone. For they did not have the heritage of centuries to overcome, and they did not have a cultural tradition which had been twisted and battered by endless years of hatred and hopelessness, nor were they excluded - these others - because of race or color - a feeling whose dark intensity is matched by no other prejudice in our society.

Nor can these differences by understood as isolated infirmities. They are a seamless web. They cause each other. They result from each other. They reinforce each other.

Much of the Negro community is buried under a blanket of history and circumstance. It is not a lasting solution to lift just one corner of that blanket. We must stand on all sides and we must raise the entire cover if we are to liberate our fellow citizens.

The Roots of Injustice

One of the differences is the increased concentration of Negroes in our cities. More than 73 percent of all Negroes live in urban areas compared with less than 70 percent of the whites. Most of these Negroes live in slums. Most of these Negroes live together - a separated people.

Men are shaped by their world. When it is a world of decay, ringed by an invisible wall, when escape is arduous and uncertain, and the saving pressures of a more hopeful society are unknown, it can cripple the youth and it can desolate the men.

There is also the burden that a dark skin can add to the search for a productive place in our society. Unemployment strikes most swiftly and broadly at the Negro, and this burden erodes hope. Blighted hope breeds despair. Despair brings indifferences to the learning which offers a way out. And despair, coupled with indifferences, is often the source of destructive rebellion against the fabric of society.

There is also the lacerating hurt of early collision with white hatred or prejudice, distaste or

condescension. Other groups have felt similar intolerance, but success and achievement could wipe it away. They do not change the color of a man's skin. I have seen this uncomprehending pain in the eyes of the little, young Mexican-American schoolchildren that I taught many years ago. But it can be overcome. But, for many, the wounds are always open.

Family Breakdown

Perhaps most important - its influence radiating to every part of life - is the breakdown of the Negro family structure. For this, most of all, white America must accept responsibility. It flows from centuries of oppression and persecution of the Negro man. It flows from long years of degradation and discrimination, which have attacked his dignity and assaulted his ability to produce for his family.

This, too, is not pleasant to look upon. But it must be faced by those whose serious intent is to improve the life of all Americans.

Only a minority - less than half - of all Negro children reach the age of 18 having lived all their lives with both of their parents. At this moment, tonight, little less than two-thirds are at home with both of their parents. Probably a majority of all Negro children receive federally aided public assistance sometime during their childhood.

The family is the cornerstone of our society. More than any other force it shapes the attitude, the hopes, the ambitions, and the values of the child. And when the family collapses it is the children that are usually damaged. When it happens on a massive scale the community itself is crippled.

So, unless we work to strengthen the family, to create conditions under which most parents will stay together - all the rest: schools, and playgrounds, and public assistance, and private concern, will never be enough to cut completely the circle of despair and deprivation.

To Fulfill These Rights

There is no single easy answer to all of these problems.

Jobs are part of the answer. They bring the income which permits a man to provide for his family.

Decent homes in decent surroundings and a chance to learn-an equal chance to learn - are part of the answer.

Welfare and social programs better designed to hold families together are part of the answer.

Care for the sick is part of the answer.

An understanding heart by all Americans is another big part of the answer.

And to all of these fronts - and a dozen more - I will dedicate the expanding efforts of the Johnson

administration.

But there are other answers that are still to be found. Nor do we fully understand even all of the problems. Therefore, I want to announce tonight that this fall I intend to call a White House conference of scholars, and experts, and outstanding Negro leaders - men of both races-and officials of Government at every level.

This White House conference's theme and title will be "To Fulfill These Rights."

Its object will be to help the American Negro fulfill the rights which, after the long time of injustice, he is finally about to secure.

To move beyond opportunity to achievement.

To shatter forever not only the barriers of law and public practice, but the walls which bound the condition of many by the color of his skin.

To dissolve, as best we can, the antique enmities of the heart which diminish the holder, divide the great democracy, and do wrong - great wrong - to the children of God.

And I pledge you tonight that this will be a chief goal of my administration, and of my program next year, and in the years to come. And I hope, and I pray, and I believe, it will be a part of the program of all America.

What Is Justice

For what is justice?

It is to fulfill the fair expectations of man.

Thus, American justice is a very special thing. For, from the first, this has been a land of towering expectation. It was to be a nation where each man could be ruled by the common consent of all - enshrined in law, given life by institutions, guided by men themselves subject to its rule. And all - all of every station and origin - would be touched equally in obligation and in liberty.

Beyond the law lay the land. It was a rich land, glowing with more abundant promise than man had ever seen. Here, unlike any place yet known, all were to share the harvest.

And beyond this was the dignity of man. Each could become whatever his qualities of mind and spirit would permit - to strive, to seek, and, if he could, to find his happiness.

This is American justice. We have pursued it faithfully to the edge of our imperfections, and we have failed to find it for the American Negro.

So, it is the glorious opportunity of this generation to end the one huge wrong of the American Nation

and, in so doing, to find America for ourselves, with the same immense thrill of discovery which gripped those who first began to realize that here, at last, was a home for freedom.

All it will take is for all of us to understand what this country is and what this country must become.

The Scripture promises: "I shall light a candle of understanding in thine heart, which shall not be put out."

Together, and with millions more, we can light that candle of understanding in the heart of all America.

And once lit, it will never again go out.